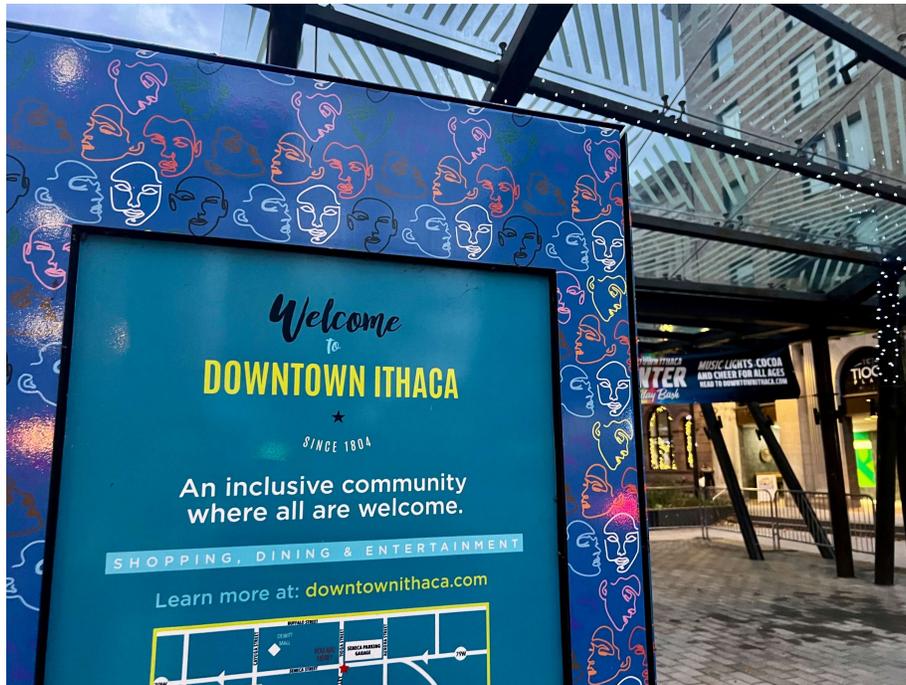




IWR's 2025 in Summary



With winter decidedly setting in, we invite you to read our [final blog post of the year](#) - a perspective on 2025 by Executive Director Casey Verderosa. This year, displaced people in our community have dealt with a slew of harmful federal policy changes targeting immigrants, as well as reduced social services and the increase to cost of living, all while working through the challenges of starting from scratch in a new place. Read the post to learn about insights and achievements from IWR's work over the past 12 months. From all of us at IWR, thank you, readers and supporters, for your part in keeping this an inclusive and welcoming community. We wish you a warm and bright end to the year!

Photo credit: Lea Holstetter-Habib

Update on our End of Year Appeal

We are preparing to support newcomers in our community in what is likely to be another tough year. We need your help! Our End of Year Appeal aims to raise \$70,000 from individual supporters to help meet the needs of people who have joined us from all over the world and are facing challenging circumstances as they rebuild their lives in Tompkins County. So far we have received donations from 91 community members totalling \$33,690! We are so grateful to everyone who has already given. If you have yet to donate and would like to do so, there is still time. Make a gift via our website using the button below or mail a check to: Ithaca Welcomes Refugees, 315 N Cayuga St, Ithaca, NY 14850. You can also help us by forwarding this newsletter or sharing our [End of Year Appeal email](#) from November with your contacts.

[Donate online](#)

Use Your Voice

Earlier this month, the Trump administration announced it would re-examine more than 200,000 Afghan refugees who were legally admitted to the US between January 20, 2021 and February 20, 2025. People who fled persecution and have built lives in our communities are now at risk of having their status rescinded through no doing of their own. Help raise strong opposition to this destructive policy change by adding your name to this [Immigration Forum petition](#) to Congress. If you can, go a step further and call your elected representatives to express why this matters to you.

Current Needs



It has been a busy year of moves and donation drives for the Welcome Home program! Thank you to everyone who has volunteered and donated to help new arrivals set up home.

We continue to welcome a family with two babies. Can you help source the following items for them?

- **diapers in sizes 2 and 3**
- **baby monitor**
- **small dresser**
- **coat rack**

You can also support this family and others by donating **gently used baby and children's items** to the Mama Goose & Jillian's Drawers store on Clinton Street and adding the store credit received in exchange to IWR's account. We turn the credit you donate into store vouchers for IWR families with children. Check the [Mama Goose schedule](#) for drop-off dates. Note that Mama Goose will take a month's break from accepting donations in January.

We welcome donations of **gift cards from grocery stores** in the area that we can pass on to families we are working with who are struggling with food insecurity. Please note the amount on the face of the gift card and mail it to Ithaca Welcomes Refugees, 315 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca, NY14850.

For questions about donations, please contact Perdita Das from our Welcome Home team at welcome.home@ithacawelcomesrefugees.org.

For up to date needs information, check the [Current Needs for Families](#) page on our website, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Bluesky](#).

Upcoming Events on Immigration

A [final event in the series](#) "Constitution: Rights to Know" will be held at the Tompkins County Public Library **today, December 18th, 6-8 pm**, focused on the topic of citizenship. Michael Dorf, the Robert S. Stevens Professor of Law at Cornell University and co-author of *On Reading the Constitution* will lead the discussion, which will touch on the evolution of citizenship over time, the historic role of race in U.S. citizenship, and the current administration's efforts to end birthright citizenship. .

On **January 8 from 1-2pm**, join Steve Yale-Loehr and four other Cornell Law experts for a free [webinar on how immigration law and policy changed in 2025](#) and what we might expect in 2026. If you can't make the live webinar, registration via the link allows you to access the webinar recording afterwards.

Resist with Wide Awake Bakery!



Our friends at [Wide Awake Bakery](#) have launched a special new line of drinkware with the positive action-oriented vibe we need in these times. And out of every Resist mug purchased, 10% is donated to IWR! Check them out at their store on Franklin Street.

Gratitude

We are immensely thankful to the organizers of the highly successful Fall Jewelry Sale that took place on November 22nd. Led by Yvonne Fogarty and Debbie Benzer, a well-oiled team of volunteers succeeded in raising an incredible \$14,540 for IWR programs! Thank you to everyone who donated jewelry and attended the sale.

We also share our deepest gratitude with three funders that awarded grants to IWR this month:

- The **Park Foundation** for a grant of \$12,700 for general operating support;
- The **City Federation of Women's Organizations** for a Women Building Community grant of \$6,000 for Global Roots Play School;

- The **J. M. McDonald Foundation Inc.** for a grant of \$5,000 towards IWR staff operating costs.



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